

Message Text

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15
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SUBJECT: BENIN PRESIDENT KEREKOU VISITS ROMANIA

REF: A) COTONOU 1192; B) COTONOU 1108

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PRESIDENT MATHIEU KEREKOU OF BENIN VISITED ROMANIA AT INVITATION OF PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU JULY 21-24 AMID HEAVY ROMANIAN MEDIA COVERAGE. TWO LEADERS SIGNED JOINT SOLEMN DECLARATION AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE, AN ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROTOCOL AND EXCHANGED CONSULAR NOTES IN OTHERWISE UNEVENTFUL VISIT. DESPITE MUCH POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE, ROMANIANS COULD NOT EVEN GET A BENIN PLEDGE TO SUPPORT THEIR ATTENDANCE AT NAM COLOMBO SUMMIT. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING VISITS TO NORTH KOREA AND CHINA (REF . A), PRESIDENT KEREKOU PAID FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO ROMANIA, ACCOMPANIED BY ROMANIA MEDIA DISPLAY CONSIDERED HEAVY EVEN FOR THIRD WORLD HEAD OF STATE. VISIT WAS VIEWED BY BOTH SIDES AS INTER-PARTY AS WELL AS INTER-STATE, AND RCP SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS STEFAN ANDREI JOINED MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN TRADE, INTERIOR, AND TRANSPORTATION AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR BILATERAL

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TALKS. OFFICIALS FROM MINISTRIES OF HEAVY MACHINE CON-

STRUCTION, AGRICULTURE, AND STATE PLANNING COMMITTEE WERE ALSO PRESENT. BENIN'S DELEGATION INCLUDED PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY CC MEMBERS IOSEF DEGLA AND ROMAIN VILLON GUEZA, WHO BORE NO GOVERNMENT PORTFOLIOS.

3. JOINT SOLEMN DECLARATION AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE WERE VAGUE AND DEVOID OF SPECIFICS. DECLARATION PLEDGED CLOSER ECONOMIC, TECHNICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND CULTURAL COOPERATION AS WELL AS INTENSIFICATION OF BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL TIES, BUT NO NEW AGREEMENTS WERE INTIMATED. USUAL SUPPORT WAS GIVEN TO PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY, EQUALITY, NON-INTERFERENCE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND RESPECT FOR THE INVIOABILITY OF FRONTIERS, DECLARATION'S HEAVY WEIGHTING TO THESE PRINCIPLES MADE LINK TO RECENT ENTEBBE EVENTS, UNMENTIONED EITHER HERE OR IN COMMUNIQUE, HARD FOR READER TO IGNORE.

4. COMPARED WITH THAT OF MOST RECENT VISITS HERE OF OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS (SENEGAL, BURUNDI), COMMUNIQUE SEEMED TO REFLECT GREATER BENIN INPUT THAN ROMANIAN. NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT WAS ENDORSED, BUT GENERAL DISARMAMENT (A ROMANIAN CONCERN) COMPLETELY IGNORED. NON-ALIGNMENT WAS GIVEN LITTLE SPACE IN DOCUMENT AND WHILE GENERAL SUPPORT FOR COLUMBO CONFERENCE WAS EXPRESSED, NO MENTION WAS MADE OF ROMANIA'S DESIRE FOR SOME SORT OF OFFICIAL STATUS WITH NON-ALIGNED GROUP. CONFIRMING OIL CONNECTION BETWEEN BENIN AND ROMANIA (REF B), COMMUNIQUE NOTED THAT TWO HEADS OF STATE DISCUSSED PETROCHEMICAL EXPLOITATION AND REFINING, AND MINING AND GEOLOGICAL RESEARCH, BUT NO INDICATIONS WERE GIVEN THAT TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS ON THESE SUBJECTS TOOK PLACE AT THE MINISTRY LEVEL.

5. ROMANIAN PRESS EXCERPTED KEREKOU'S EVIDENTLY LONG-WINDED DESCRIPTION OF BENIN'S REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATION DURING HIS JULY 22 DINNER TOAST. IN THIS SPEECH HE ALSO TOOK PAINS TO REITERATE HIS COUNTRY'S COMMITMENT TO "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM" AND "MARXIST-LENINIST PHILOSOPHY", TO WHICH THERE WAS NO ROMANIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

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6. COMMENT. LONG ON FORM BUT SHORT ON ACTUAL ACHIEVEMENT VISIT OF BENIN'S HEAD OF STATE IS NONTHELESS ANOTHER INDICATION OF CURRENT ROMANIAN PREOCCUPATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD.
VIETS

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